Great things often evolve from small or modest beginnings. That was certainly the case in 1961 when Fred C. Adams and his late wife, Barbara, founded the event in Cedar City with lofty goals, a bargain-basement budget of $1,000, and 21 volunteers. They envisioned what few others could see—that the 150,000 tourists who flocked to the area each summer might also be gathered for a theater festival.

Today, the Utah Shakespeare Festival is the proud recipient of a Tony Award for being the ''outstanding regional theatre in America.'' It operates year-round, boasts a $6.6 million budget, employs 26 Equity actors and has another 300 community volunteers. Its repertoire has also expanded. Yes, Shakespeare is still the main attraction, but the festival also stages plays from three centuries of playwrights from all across Europe and the United States.

Not bad for a festival that is 250 miles from Salt Lake City, the State's largest metropolitan area.

Geography, though, can hardly be the sole consideration for theatre aficionados who wish to attend the festival. It is simply too good and too glorious to miss, for mileage's sake. That is why I and millions of others have eagerly gone the distance many times to take in Shakespeare's plays at the open-air Adams Memorial Theatre—modeled after the playwright's famed Globe Theatre in London—and other offerings at the indoor Randall L. Jones Theatre. Every time I have gone, I have been thoroughly entertained and richly rewarded.

But the past is past, or, as Shakespeare put it, ''What is past is prologue.'' I look forward to many more productions there, and for the event to capture ever-more acclaim and captivate ever-larger and more appreciative audiences. Perhaps the Bard of Avon's words best sum up the festival's future: ''The golden age is before us, not behind us.'' I firmly believe that to be true.

On this, the 50th anniversary of the Utah Shakespeare Festival, I salute the visionaries like Fred and Barbara Adams, Executive Director R. Scott Phillips, and the scores of organizers, performers, and volunteers who have and continue to make this wonderful event possible.

I commend them for a wonderful 50 years and wish them well as they embark on the next 50 and continue to carry out the festival's mission to ''entertain, enrich and educate.''

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING DR. WALTER A. SOBOLEFF, SR.

● Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I wish to memorialize Dr. Walter A. Soboleff, Sr., who died at his home on May 22, 2011. During a life which spanned more than 102 years, Dr. Soboleff was revered as one of Alaska's greatest teachers. A Presbyterian minister, Tlingit scholar and elder, his quiet wisdom, wry humor, and loving leadership bridged cultures to change attitudes and lives.

Born November 14, 1908, in Killisnoo, AK, to a Tlingit mother and the son of a Russian Orthodox priest, Walter was a member of the Yéil moiety, Raven; L'eeneidi clan, Dog Salmon; and Aanx'aakhittaan House. His Tlingit names included T'aaw Chán and Kaajaakwtí.

From fifth grade through high school, Dr. Soboleff emerged as an academic talent at Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian mission school in Sitka, AK. Though baptized by his Russian Orthodox grandfather, his experience at Sheldon Jackson led him to the Presbyterian ministry. Few Alaska Natives had access to college in the 1930s, but Dr. Soboleff was hungry to learn. He attended a term at Oregon State University, fished commercially, and worked the canneries before receiving a full scholarship to the theological seminary at the University of Dubuque, Iowa. He completed his graduate degree there in 1940.

With many offers to fill pulpits around the country, Dr. Soboleff chose to return to Alaska. As the first ordained Alaska Native, he led Juneau's Memorial Presbyterian Church, a struggling mission to the Tlingits. For many at that time, an integrated church was inconceivable, but Dr. Soboleff's inspired fusion of Tlingit and Christian spirituality attracted a diverse and growing congregation. His teachings were so resonant that part of his service was broadcast on the radio, and he even had a weekly news program which was broadcast in the Tlingit language.

Although Memorial Church closed in 1962, Dr. Soboleff maintained his spirit, relocating his ministry to the mission boats Anna Jackman and Princeton Hall. On them, he traveled southeast Alaska to serve remote villages, logging camps, and lighthouse stations.

A man who walked his talk, Dr. Soboleff was an activist of quiet strength who dedicated himself to humanitarian service and the preservation of his culture. He exemplified caring, understanding, and mutual respect. When denied housing because he and his wife Genevieve were Native, and when the Presbyterians closed his church without explanation, he chose the high road and subsequently opened doors. He responded to conflict with benevolence and racial bias with equanimity, and his unexpected kindness softened difficult situations to invite open relationships and understanding.

A worker rather than a joiner, Dr. Soboleff belonged to many diverse organizations, all dedicated to human understanding and, for him, the preservation of his culture.

As a member of the Alaska Native Brotherhood, he served in all offices including seven terms as grand president. Through ANB he worked to empower Alaska Natives and develop collaborations with other organizations to shape antidiscrimination and land claims legislation. After passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971, Dr. Soboleff served as a director of the Sealaska Corporation, president of Kootznoowoo, Inc., and chair of the Sealaska Heritage Institute's Board of Trustees.

As a member of the Lions Club, he helped to found the Gold Medal Basketball Tournament, an event which continues to unite southeast Alaska communities in sport.

As a member of the Alaska National Guard, he served 20 years as chaplain and retired as a lieutenant colonel.

In recognition of his many outstanding achievements, the University of Dubuque awarded Dr. Soboleff an honorary doctorate in divinity in 1952; the University of Alaska would follow suit with an honorary doctorate of humanities in 1968.

Widely recognized as one who understood the value of education, Dr. Soboleff was appointed by Governor Walter J. Hickel to the State board of education. The first Alaska Native to serve, he became chair in 1967. In 1970, he became the first director of Native Studies at UAF. There, he taught Tlingit history, language, and literature. Fluent both in Tlingit and English, he translated stories to revive the Tlingit language and restore his people's pride in themselves and their heritage. Cross-cultural understanding and human respect were so important to Dr. Soboleff, that he stayed active until the end of his long life, addressing a rally against domestic violence just weeks before his death. His presence and his words, as always, made a difference.

To Dr. Soboleff's four children, Janet, Sasha, Walter, and Ross, and to his extended family, we send deep condolences along with joy for the gift of his longevity. While Alaska has lost one of the greatest of her leaders, the teachings of Walter A. Soboleff have shaped how we view ourselves and how we treat one another. Those touched by his spirit have been changed for the better, and his legacy lives on.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)